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ABSTRACT

The Continuing Education Unit (CEU) in postsecondary education seeks to provide continuing education learners with a permanent record of participation in non-credit learning activities. A CEU survey was conducted in Illinois during 1975. The survey was distributed to all postsecondary institutions in the State and to those professions whose members are licensed by the Illinois Department of Registration and Education. Data were obtained from 106 colleges and universities and 36 professional associations. The findings of the study are briefly summarized. The major portion of the document contains appended materials, which include the 14-item survey instrument, item-by-item tabulations of responses, comments from respondents on the CEU survey, a summary of the survey results which was sent to respondents, and a list of institutions and associations which currently award the CEU. (Author/EC)

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The State-of-the-Art of the Continuing Education Unit in Illinois

Clive C. Veri, Dean[1]
College of Continuing Education
Northern Illinois University
November 20, 1975

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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Introduction

The Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is a relatively new currency in post-secondary education having been introduced in 1968 and piloted in 1970-71. Since the publishing of The Continuing Education Unit Criteria and Guidelines[2] in 1974, the CEU has gained a great deal of interest throughout the United States by colleges, universities and professional associations as these groups seek to provide continuing education learners with a permanent record of participation in non-credit learning activities.

In Illinois, a Task Force was established in 1974 to study the nationally accepted CEU guidelines and to develop a statewide plan for the award of the CEU. The recommendation of the Task Force to the Illinois Board of Higher Education and the Illinois Community College Board was that these bodies commend to the higher education institutions under their respective jurisdictions the adoption of the CEU.

The Illinois Survey

The Continuing Education Unit survey was conducted in the Fall of 1975 to determine the state-of-the-art of the CEU in Illinois. The survey (see Appendix A) was distributed to all post-secondary institutions in the State, and (because the CEU has special utility to user groups) to those professions whose members are licensed by the Illinois Department of Registration and Education. Table 1 presents the distribution and the response to the questionnaire.

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[1]The author is indebted to Mrs. Donna Krings of the College of Continuing Education at NIU who assumed the major tasks of managing the administration of the questionnaire and analyzing the data on which this report is based.

[2]The National Task Force on the Continuing Education Unit, The Continuing Education Unit Criteria and Guidelines. National University Extension Association, Washington, D.C., 1974.

CE007812

Table 1

Survey Response by Type of Respondent

Category and Type	Questionnaires Sent		Response	
	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent Returned
INSTITUTIONS	153	55.6	106	74.6
Public Senior 14				
Public Community 50				
Private Senior 48				
Private Junior 8				
Theological 15				
Private Professional 8				
Other Private 10				
ASSOCIATIONS	122	44.4	36	25.4
TOTAL	275	100.0	142	100.0

This report, then, is based on data provided by 106 colleges and universities and 36 professional associations or a total return of 51.6 percent.[1]

Appendix B presents the results of the survey for each of the questions asked. The major findings are summarized as follows:[2]

1. Twenty-one institutions (20%) and four associations (11%) responding to the survey now award the CEU.[3]

2. Of those responding to question 5a, 29 institutions (51%) and 6 (35%) associations reported they planned to award the CEU in 1-3 years; 7 institutions (12%) planned to offer the CEU in 4-6 years; 20 institutions (35%) and 10 associations (59%) reported they never plan to offer the CEU. Within six years, 57 institutions (54%) and 11 associations (31%) will offer the CEU.

3. For those responding to item 6, 7 institutions (32%) and 3 associations (75%) reported that CEU is awarded under

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[1] The low response by associations is indicative of the general lack of knowledge of the CEU by associations as revealed in the comments of those which did respond.

[2] Since only 25.4% of the associations surveyed responded to the questionnaire, readers are cautioned to consider the data pertaining to associations as inconclusive.

[3] In a comparable Fall 1975 survey of college and university registrars, 19 institutions reportedly awarded the CEU. An additional 7 planned to award the CEU within two years. See Appendix D.

institutional or association authority. Ten institutions (45%) reported that the authority to grant CEU is by a college/division/department.

4. Of those offering CEU, records are maintained at colleges and universities by the registrar (11 or 50%) and by continuing education offices (9 or 41%).[1] For associations, 33% are maintained by a registrar and 67% by "other."

5. Of those institutions reporting, computers are used to maintain permanent records in 13 (57%) cases with 9 (39%) using hand filing systems. Two associations use computers and 3 use a hand filing system.

6. Ten institutions (45%) and 4 associations (67%) reported they would not use the services of a national computer based record system; 12 institutions (55%) and 2 associations (33%) reported they would. The majority of institutions willing to pay a fee (75%) for such services would be willing to pay $1.00 or less per student input.

7. Seventeen institutions (85%) and 3 associations (100%) reported that the guidelines they follow in the award of the CEU subscribe to those of the National and Illinois Task Forces.

8. Eighteen institutions (78%) and 2 associations (67%) reported they award the CEU for educational experiences which also award typical "academic" credit. Five institutions (22%) did not.

9. Two institutions (33%) give academic credit and award the CEU for the same learning experience; 4 (67%) do not.

10. A composite of the attitudes toward the CEU from several viewpoints were reported as being favorable (54%) or neutral (43%). The attitudes of campus/association administrators and credentialing agencies appeared to be more favorable than neutral.

Appendix C presents the comments which the questionnaire solicited. No attempt was made to taxonomize the comments on a "pro" to "con" continuum.

Summary

1. Twenty-one institutions in Illinois now award the CEU. Fifty institutions will award the CEU by 1978. Fifty-seven will award the CEU by 1981. (The 57 institutions represent 54% of those who responded to this item; it is conceivable that up to 83 institutions--54% of the total in Illinois--may award the CEU within six years.)

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[1] In the parallel survey of registrars, 10 respondents reported that records were maintained by "continuing education" offices, one reported shared responsibility by these two offices, and one reported that CEU records were maintained by the associate dean of the College. See Appendix D.

2. Four professional associations in the State now award the CEU. This will increase to 10 by 1978 and 11 by 1981.

3. Authority to award the CEU is more often granted by a college, division or department at institutions than by the central administration although the difference is not great (45% vs. 32%). In associations, the award is primarily by association authority.

4. The responsibility for permanent record keeping is about evenly divided among institutions' registrars and continuing education offices, a slight majority using the former.

5. Computer based record systems are used to maintain permanent records more often than hand filing systems at universities (57% vs. 39%), but the opposite for associations (40% vs. 60%).

6. More than half the institutions (55%) reported they favored using the services of a national computer based system if one were developed. By 1981, the potential user group could number as high as 45 institutions.

7. If the input costs of student records did not exceed $1.00 per entry, 9 institutions would use the national data bank, an additional 3 would use the service if the cost per entry did not exceed $2.00.

8. The majority of institutions and associations reported they followed the National and Illinois guidelines for the award of the CEU. There seems to be a considerable amount of confusion with the guidelines, however, since a majority of institutions and associations awarded the CEU for educational experiences which also carried typical "academic" credit, contrary to the guidelines.

9. Attitudes toward the CEU by several groups of people in Illinois are overwhelmingly not unfavorable.

10. Regardless of the position which higher education governing boards may take in Illinois, and with or without their leadership, the CEU is rapidly becoming an acceptable form of academic currency.

ILLINOIS CEU SURVEY

The Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is a permanent record of a person's participation in non-credit continuing education activities. It is defined as ten contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction and qualified instruction.

1. Name of institution/association: _____

2. Highest degree-granting authority:

- ☐ Certificate/diploma
- ☐ Associate degree
- ☐ Baccalaureate degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Doctoral degree
- ☐ Other _____ (specify)

3. Primary type of support:

- ☐ Public
- ☐ Private
- ☐ Proprietary
- ☐ Membership Fees
- ☐ Other _____ (specify)

4. Name of person reporting: _____ Telephone: ( ) _____

Address: _____

_____

5. Does your institution/association offer programs which award the CEU?

- ☐ Yes (If "yes," please go to item #6, et. al.)
- ☐ No (If "no," complete #5a and return the questionnaire in the franked envelope provided)

6. Under whose authority is the CEU awarded:

- ☐ The institution/association
- ☐ A college, division, and/or department
- ☐ Other _____ (specify)

5a. We plan to offer the CEU in about:

- ☐ 1-3 years
- ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ 7-10 years
- ☐ Probably never (Please indicate below the principle reason why the CEU is not appropriate for your institution/association.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Who maintains the permanent CEU record?

- ☐ Registrar (or similar central office)
- ☐ Continuing Education office
- ☐ Education Committee
- ☐ Other _____ (specify)

8. How are your permanent records maintained?

- ☐ Computer based
- ☐ Hand filing system
- ☐ Other _____ (specify)

9. If a national computer based CEU record-keeping system were available so that students could retrieve their records from a single source, how much would you be willing to pay per input (and perhaps "pass on" to the participant)?

☐ $1.00 or less per student
☐ Between $1.00 and $2.00 per student
☐ We wouldn't use it

10. Do your policies and guidelines which enable you to award the CEU subscribe to those of the National and Illinois Task Forces on the CEU?

☐ Yes
☐ No (If "no," how do they differ?_____

_____

_____)

11. Do you award the CEU for educational experiences which also award typical "academic" credit?

☐ No
☐ Yes If "yes," is it possible for an individual student to earn both CEU and "academic" credit for participating in the same course?

☐ Yes ☐ No

12. What kind of difficulties are you experiencing in awarding the CEU to participants?

_____

_____

_____

13. How would you describe the attitudes toward the CEU of the following people or agencies?

	Favorable	Neutral	Unfavorable
Campus/Assoc. Administrators	☐	☐	☐
Faculty	☐	☐	☐
Students/Membership	☐	☐	☐
Employers	☐	☐	☐
Credentialing Agencies	☐	☐	☐

14. What changes, if any, would you recommend (to the National Task Force) be made in the guidelines for the award of the CEU?

_____

_____

_____

We appreciate your help very much. Please return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed franked envelope.

Appendix A, Continued

Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

College of Continuing Education
Office of the Dean
815 753 1781

September 23, 1975

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans and Directors of Continuing Education/Public Service at Illinois Higher Education Institutions

SUBJECT: The Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

I have been asked by the program committee which is planning a joint meeting of deans/directors of continuing education at public higher education institutions in Illinois to give a presentation on the state-of-the-art of the CEU in Illinois.

As a basis for the presentation, it was suggested that I survey all post-secondary institutions in the State and report on the results of the survey.

I hesitate to ask for your help with yet another survey since it seems we have been surveyed to near-death this year! But, this one is most brief and should only take a few minutes of your time -- a few seconds if you do not award the CEU.

Needless to say, your early response will be appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Clive C. Veri

Clive C. Veri
Dean

CCV:djk

Enclosure

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Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

College of Continuing Education
Office of the Dean
815 753 1781

September 23, 1975

MEMORANDUM

TO: Professional Association Leaders in Illinois

SUBJECT: The Continuing Education Unit

I have been asked by a planning committee of university and community college continuing education deans to give a presentation on the state-of-the-art of the Continuing Education Unit in Illinois.

Since the special utility of the CEU applies to user groups, and particularly to members of professional associations who need a permanent record of their participation in non-credit programs, I need your help to make the survey complete.

May I impose on your time and ask you to respond to the accompanying questionnaire (even if your group is not using the CEU). If any of the items are not clear, or if you would like more information on the CEU and how it might help your members, please feel free to telephone me (or my colleague Anne Kaplan) at (815) 753-1781.

Thank you very much for your help.

Sincerely yours,

Clive C. Veri
Dean

CCV:djk

Enclosure

Northern Illinois University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

Appendix B

Responses by Questionnaire Items

Item 2. Highest degree-granting authority.

	Institutions	Associations
Certificate/diploma	2	3
Associate degree	36	0
Baccalaureate degree	20	0
Master's degree	23	1
Doctoral degree	20	1
Other	4	10

Missing data: 22 cases

Item 3. Primary type of support.

	Institutions	Associations
Public	47	2
Private	51	3
Proprietary	1	1
Membership fees	0	22
Other	0	3

Missing data: 12 cases

Item 5. Does your institution/association offer programs which award the CEU?

	Institutions	Associations
Yes	21	4
No	84	31

Missing data: 2 cases

Item 5a. We plan to offer the CEU in about:

	Institutions	Associations
1-3 years	29	6
4-6 years	7	1
7-10 years	1	0
Probably never	20	10

Missing data: 68 cases

Item 6. Under whose authority is the CEU awarded?

	Institutions	Associations
The institution/association	7	3
College, division and/or department	10	0
Other	5	1

Missing data: 116 cases

Item 7. Who maintains the permanent CEU record?

	Institutions	Associations
Registrar	11	1
Continuing Education Office	9	0
Education Committee	0	0
Other	2	2

Missing data: 117 cases

Item 8. How are your permanent records maintained?

	Institutions	Associations
Computer based	13	2
Hand filing system	9	3
Other	1	0

Missing data: 114 cases

Item 9. If a national computer based CEU record-keeping system were available so that students could retrieve their records from a single source, how much would you be willing to pay per input? (and perhaps "pass on" to the participant)

	Institutions	Associations
$1.00 or less per student	9	1
Between $1.00 and $2.00 per student	3	1
Wouldn't use it	10	4

Missing data: 114 cases

Item 10. Do your policies and guidelines which enable you to award the CEU subscribe to those of the National and Illinois Task Forces on the CEU?

	Institutions	Associations
Yes	17	3
No	3	0

Missing data: 119 cases

Item 11. Do you award the CEU for educational experiences which also award typical "academic" credit?

	Institutions	Associations
Yes	18	2
No	5	1

Missing data: 116 cases

Item 11, part 2. If "yes" is it possible for an individual student to earn both CEU and "academic" credit for participating in the same course?

	Institutions	Associations
Yes	2	1
No	4	0

Missing data: 135 cases

Item 13. How would you describe the attitudes toward the CEU of the following people or agencies?

Attitude of Campus/ Assoc. Administrators	Institutions	Associations
Favorable	15	2
Neutral	7	0
Unfavorable	2	0

Missing data: 115 cases

Attitude of Faculty		
Favorable	12	1
Neutral	12	0
Unfavorable	1	0

Missing data: 116 cases

Attitude of Students/Membership		
Favorable	12	3
Neutral	12	0
Unfavorable	0	0

Missing data: 116 cases

Item 13, continued.

Attitude of Employers	Institutions	Associations
Favorable	9	1
Neutral	13	1
Unfavorable	0	0

Missing data: 118 cases

Attitude of Credentialing Agency		
Favorable	11	1
Neutral	7	0
Unfavorable	1	0

Missing data: 122 cases

Appendix C

Respondent Comments on CEU Survey

Comments

"We remain flexible. To date no requests for CEU from community groups."

"We don't know much about it. Would appreciate more information."

"No great demand for CEU other than from the R.N.'s who are very much interested in securing CEU's."

"Become more active in informing groups about CEU."

"We offer actual hours and see no justification for a decimal point. We keep records et.al. but not in CEU's."

"We do not have such a program but we would like to have funeral services related programs offered at different state shools. Any ideas?"

"We follow AMA practice, and measure credit in clock-hours."

"The nature of our Institution does not lend itself to the CEU at this time. We are a postsecondary institution to train and/or upgrade under educated and under/unemployed persons 18 and over. It is conceivable that CEU will be offered to staff sometime in the future."

"There are no differences in awarding the CEU to participants, however the difficulty arises in the recruitment of participants."

"CEU credits be used exclusively for programs, courses, etc. which aid the student to become certified, credentialled, or licensed, vis a vis courses of study for which there do not exist appropriate academic credits which are for personal self-enrichment and fulfillment of avocational interests."

Comments

"The nature of our program does not lend itself to CEU."

"At the present time we do not offer programs for which the CEU is an appropriate measure. We will continue to keep informed about the CEU and its implications for our programs here at ."

"Haven't really looked into CEU's Please send information."

"It seems that we are waiting for complete acceptance of the CEU on a statewide basis. It will be necessary to prepare new data processing programs when this becomes accepted."

'I do not know what CEU is. Have never heard of it before."

"Since our major program is teacher education, the CEU credit seems inappropriate to our faculty."

"We do not have a continuing education program for our members- we would like to develop one."

"We are not sure what direction will be taking."

(Item 12: difficulties in awarding CEU)

"Few students have indicated interest in completing the hours necessary for certificates to be awarded. Isolated courses are taken but not in the prescribed groupings."

"Study is needed to reflect the interest of students for packaged general studies programs awarding certificates rather than courses designed for a specific skill building objective."

Comments

"Honestly, I don't know anything about it."

"There would be a problem of conversion of our data system to accommodate the CEU."

"There has been discussion in the past, but no serious consideration at this date. If a poll were to be taken, opinions would be expressed which range over the full spectrum for pro to con."

"We initiated an experiment during the 1975 Summer School in which the CEU was awarded for the first time at As a result, our experience with the CEU has been minimal and without particular difficulties."

"Our Center has basic questions about putting continuing education in yet another "box" which, in our view, limits our freedom to develop programs which in terms of content, process, length, etc. are responsive to people."

"The inner city people for whom we develop courses are primarily concerned with problem-solving rather than CEU's."

"I would be interested in some information concerning CEU policies and guidelines of the National and Illinois Task Force."

"We established our own system in 1970; therefore would not be interested in changing at this time."

"We have our own credit system."

"Only our schools of nursing and dental medicine are using CEU's. Other schools are not interested."

(Difficulties)
"Time and cost to prepare award."
"Contributors need assistance in preparing proposal."
(Changes)

Comments

"Our campus would offer the CEU if it became the standard policy of the other colleges in the Illinois Community College System."

"Not appropriate to a liberal arts baccalaureate program such as ours."

"We have not emphasized continuing ed."

"How to use to compute work load of instructor?"

"We presently have other established units with ICCB."

"We are considering it, but have not gone into detail concerning its implications. Would appreciate results of your study for consideration in our deliberations."

"Currently no need to...as soon as it is required by the State for administrative licensure we will."

"No reason to offer at this time."

"The presently uses a recording system based on one credit per hour of participation; however, the Assoc. continues to be interested in the CEU. Future direction to be taken in this regard is uncertain at the present time."

"Currently we keep no records of persons enrolled in non-credit courses."

"We clear courses offered thru CE for full college credit at both undergrad and graduate level."

"We're on the verge! When we move to this; it will largely be for activities of the Business School."

"I confess that the ambiguous language is bothersome. I'd rather see more consensus on activities that count and those that don't count."

"All of the classes offered by the CE Dept. are non-credit. We hold American Institute of Banking courses at the college with the Institute giving credit toward their certificates."

Comments

(Changes)
"Individual petition requirements needed for programs not approved; are too expensive."

"The -Continuing Education Studies Division is actively studying the CEU program-its implications and problems."

"Leave it alone for 2-3 more years; then evaluate. The dust hasn't settled yet!"

"We would be interested in receiving information on policies and guidelines for offering CEU - this year we will present certificates for Study Course attendance - copy enclosed."

"It is required that all registrants be members of Licensed Practical Nurse Association Division I of Ill. It is this association that should plan CEU's for the licensed practical nurse."

"We have had only limited interest shown in CEUs by our board and by the National groups with which we work. However, we may get very interested if a Board member gets turned on."

"Would like to see "State" acceptance (IBHE or ICCB). Make it worthwhile or accredited. "No value" now except if move elsewhere where it is in use. We maintain permanent record now of non-credit participation of students."

(Difficulties)
"Distance is a real problem for busy people.

"Allow professionals to select colleges and universities of their choice to continue their education, also, National organization to open doors to non-members who are otherwise qualified."

"Follow policy used by AMA for their Physician's Recognition Award."

"We are a professionally oriented single purpose institution."

Comments

"We are willing to consider offering the CEU as the need becomes apparent to us. Currently we are able to evaluate most of these types of educational experiences in terms of full academic credit through either the Board of Governors degree program or our own experiential learning program."

"We have our own data system and physicians are not usually interested in obtaining another degree in their continuing medical education programs."

"Some form of it will be appropriate--but churches are slow moving--it will take time."

Difficulties:
"Objection from Deans at Professional Schools and colleges."

"Our CE Committee has recommended the CEU to our constituent associations."

"We have minimal use of the CEU and minimal response to its responsibility. Our students seem intent on earning academic credit."

"The keeps a record of CME credits."

"Major problem is the widespread differences in State optometry laws, almost precluding any possibility of standardization."

Appendix D

Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois 60115

October 27, 1975

Re: Continuing Education Unit (CEU)

As you requested, below are presented the results of the survey in which you recently participated. Again, thank you very much for taking the time to complete and return the questionnaire as rapidly as you did. It was most helpful - both in terms of content and in allowing me to report the results at IACRAO last week in Springfield.

The questionnaire was mailed originally to all institutions listed in last year's IACRAO directory addressed to the registrar; n = 133. Seventy-seven or 58% of you responded as follows:

1. Has your institution adopted and is it utilizing the CEU?

19 (25%) yes 57 no

One college indicated it experimented offering the CEU last summer and this fall is analyzing and evaluating that experience.

Of the 19 reporting "yes," a breakdown by institutional type showed the following pattern:

	n
private 4 year	7
private 2 year	1
public 4 year	4
public 2 year	6
professional school	1

One college indicated it had adopted and was using the CEU but did not reply to the remaining questions.

2. If not, do you anticipate it will do so within the next one-two years?

7 yes 19 no 31 unknown

Of the 7 reporting "yes," response by institutional type showed:

	n
private 4 year	2
public 4 year	1
public 2 year	4

3. If the answer to 1. above is "yes," what stage are you in with respect to establishment of a CEU record-keeping operation?

being planned	9
already established	9

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4. If a record-keeping facility is established, what office on your campus is responsible for it?

	n
registrar/registration and records	10
continuing education	6
shared between the above	1
associate dean of college	1

5. If you have experienced any problems or difficulties relevant to the CEU, whether concerning policy or record-keeping development, implementation, and/or operation, please specify below:

No problems were reported specifically relevant to the CEU. Two institutions indicated certain difficulties but these were typical of the type of problem(s) encountered with the introduction of any change in program or process.

---

note: Two public 2 year colleges reported they use credit hour equivalents in accounting for non-credit courses.

Sincerely,

Jack D. McFadden
Director of Admissions
and Records

mr

Appendix E

Institutions and Associations in
Illinois which Currently Award the CEU

November 18, 1975

1. Bradley University
2. Southeastern Illinois College
3. Harper College
4. Rush College of Nursing and Allied Health
5. Augustana College
6. Joliet Junior College
7. Robert Morris College
8. Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville
9. Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine
10. Kendall College
11. Waubonsee Community College (thru INA)
12. Principia College
13. Illinois College of Podiatric Medicine
14. Van Norman University (thru NAPT)
15. Illinois State University
16. North Central College
17. Highland Community College (thru INA)
18. State Community College
19. Southern Illinois University-Carbondale
20. University of Illinois Medical Center Campus
    (School of Public Health)
21. Northern Illinois University
22. Lewis University
23. Western Illinois University
24. Illinois College of Optometry
25. National League for Nursing
26. Illinois Nursing Association (Chicago District)
27. Illinois State Society of Physical Therapists, Inc.
28. Visiting Nurse Association of Chicago